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Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2100 (2013) of 25 April 2013, by which the Council established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), subsuming the United Nations Office in Mali (UNOM), with MINUSMA assuming responsibility for the implementation of the mandated tasks of UNOM.

2. In that resolution, the Council requested me to keep it regularly informed of the situation in Mali and the implementation of the mandate of MINUSMA and to provide a report to it within 45 days of the adoption of the resolution, specifically on the security situation and the political process, and to include updates on the priority political elements, including the implementation of the transitional road map, the electoral process and relevant information on the progress, promotion and protection of human rights and international humanitarian law. In addition, I was requested to provide a review of the troop level, force generation and deployment of all constituent elements of MINUSMA. The present report provides the requested updates and information on major developments in Mali since the issuance of my report of 26 March 2013 (S/2013/189).

II. Update on major developments

A. Political developments

3. During the reporting period, there were a number of developments relating to the dialogue and reconciliation process, the situation in Kidal and the mobilization of national and international stakeholders in the lead-up to the presidential and national legislative elections. They represent moderate progress in efforts to restore constitutional order and the country's territorial integrity. Mali continues, however, to face overlapping political, security and humanitarian challenges that pose threats to the population and social cohesion. Social polarization, intercommunal tensions and antagonism between political actors remain high and could escalate into further conflict if unresolved.

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Dialogue and reconciliation

4. In a significant step, the interim President, Dioncounda Traoré, appointed the President and two Vice-Presidents of the National Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation on 30 March. On 10 April, 30 members of the Commission were appointed by presidential decree and, on 25 April, all its members officially took office. While many viewed this as a positive development in order to move the dialogue and reconciliation process forward, some have criticized the Commission for a perceived lack of transparency in the selection of its membership and insufficient inclusion of religious, community and traditional leaders. The United Nations is providing technical and logistical support to the Commission.

5. There have been significant developments regarding the situation in Kidal. The Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad and the newly established Haut Conseil de l'Azawad have expressed willingness to engage in dialogue with the transitional Government to begin negotiations on the basis of respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and secularism of Mali. Together with the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the European Union, the United Nations has continued to actively engage the transitional Government and groups in the north, in particular the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad, with a view to facilitating direct talks that would pave the way for the holding of presidential and legislative elections nationwide and substantive dialogue after the polls.

6. The Acting Head of MINUSMA visited Kidal and Tessalit from 29 to 31 March, and Kidal again on 25 April, where he engaged local representatives, including a council of elders, civil society, the Mouvement islamique de l'Azawad and the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad, on the prevailing situation and a possible way forward for dialogue. The interlocutors stressed the need to resolve the situation in Kidal peacefully and to address the root causes of the problems in the northern regions, which in their view resulted from governance issues.

7. My Special Representative for West Africa has worked closely with the Acting Head of MINUSMA to facilitate the launch of a dialogue between the Malian authorities and armed groups in the northern regions. He travelled to Bamako from 30 April to 2 May, where meetings were held, together with the African Union High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, Special Representative and Head of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), Pierre Buyoya, the Special Representative for Mali of the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Aboudou Touré Cheaka, and the Acting Head of MINUSMA, with the interim President and the Prime Minister of Mali, who both confirmed the intent of the Malian authorities to engage in dialogue with the armed groups in the northern regions. They also undertook a joint visit to Ouagadougou for consultations with the ECOWAS Mediator, Blaise Compaoré, on the way forward. Subsequently, on 10 May, the Acting Head of MINUSMA, the Head of AFISMA and the European Union Special Representative for the Sahel, Michel Reveyrand de Menthon, met representatives of the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad in Ouagadougou.

8. These rounds of discussion with the Malian authorities and representatives of the groups in the north yielded encouraging results. The parties expressed commitment to initiating dialogue as soon as possible and stressed that there was a need to find a mutually acceptable and sustainable solution to the problems of the north. The

interim President endorsed a preparatory phase of the dialogue to reach agreement that the principles of territorial integrity, non-application of sharia and disarmament would govern the participation of armed groups in the national dialogue and reconciliation process. The Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad requested international guarantees to ensure a meaningful post-electoral dialogue on the future status of the north and on the implementation of any future agreement.

9. Subsequently, the transitional Government and the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad endorsed the seven-step facilitation plan developed by the United Nations in close coordination with the African Union, ECOWAS and the European Union. The aim of the facilitation plan is for the parties to reach agreement on a framework that would pave the way for nationwide elections, including in Kidal, create conditions conducive to the deployment of MINUSMA and outline the post-electoral framework for dialogue.

10. On 16 May, the interim President appointed Tiébilé Dramé as his adviser on the situation in the northern regions and mandated him to coordinate national, regional and international efforts to address the recurring instability in the north, including by finding a negotiated solution involving the armed groups and militias. In this context, from 26 to 30 May, he met representatives of the Haut Conseil de l'Azawad in Niamey and the Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad and the Alliance of Arab Communities in Nouakchott. He subsequently reported that the parties had expressed willingness to discuss a framework agreement that would pave the way for the holding of elections nationwide and subsequent substantive discussions with elected officials on the problems facing the northern regions.

11. On 3 June, the ECOWAS mediation team convened a meeting of the international community in Ouagadougou to discuss preparations for direct talks between the transitional Government and armed groups in the northern regions. The meeting was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, Djibril Ypènè Bassolé. Mr. Dramé, on behalf of the transitional Government, and a joint delegation from the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad and the Haut Conseil de l'Azawad noted a commitment to dialogue and to holding the presidential election as scheduled (see para. 12). The joint delegation from the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad and the Haut Conseil de l'Azawad reaffirmed its commitment to the territorial integrity, sovereignty and secularism of Mali. Participants raised concern about the growing tensions on the ground and called upon all sides to desist from acts of provocation that could negatively affect the continuing mediation efforts. A team comprising the ECOWAS mediation team and representatives of the African Union and the United Nations was established to finalize the draft framework agreement, which is to be presented to the parties on 7 June, before the launch of direct talks.

Elections

12. On 27 May, the interim President announced new dates for the elections. The first round of the presidential election is scheduled for 28 July, with a possible second round on 11 August. The legislative elections are to be held in September. On 20 May, the National Assembly adopted the revised Electoral Act. It was subsequently promulgated on 22 May. The revised legislation provides for the use of biometric voter registration aimed at enhancing the transparency and credibility of the polls.

13. Preparations for the elections are under way, although several challenges remain, including the situation in areas under the control of the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad, the management of voting for internally displaced persons and refugees and the inclusion in the voter register of up to 400,000 young people who reached voting age after the establishment of the civil registry. The civil registry currently includes some 6.9 million prospective voters. Most of the electoral materials distributed to the northern regions for polls to be held in 2012 were destroyed in the conflict and need to be replaced. Lastly, the security conditions throughout the country need to be conducive to the holding of polls.

14. The proposed financial requirement for the presidential and legislative elections is $128 million, of which the transitional Government has pledged approximately $50 million. The remaining $78 million is being mobilized through a basket fund administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). As at 27 May, the European Union, Luxembourg, Sweden, Canada and UNDP had provided $35 million to the fund, leaving a gap of some $43 million.

15. MINUSMA has continued to support efforts to create an environment conducive to the conduct of free, fair, transparent and inclusive presidential and legislative elections, including by providing technical assistance to the Malian authorities. To this end, it is assisting the transitional Government's efforts to build political consensus around outstanding electoral issues. Discussions are continuing between the transitional Government and political actors, including presidential candidates and civil society, on the signing of an electoral code of conduct. MINUSMA will use all available resources to support the elections, including assistance with security and logistical needs. The Mission will, however, be unable to provide the level of support that it could otherwise provide in later stages of deployment.

16. With the support of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the Ministry of Women's Affairs held an event on 30 April, with the participation of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization, to launch the transitional Government's national strategy for the participation and representation of women in elections. The strategy was updated to include certain provisions of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, including a recommendation that a 30 per cent quota for participation of women candidates be included in the electoral law. Currently, only 10 per cent of Malian parliamentarians are women. This provision was not, however, included in the amended draft electoral law that was presented to the National Assembly.

International and regional developments

17. On 19 April, the African Union, ECOWAS and the United Nations co-chaired the fourth meeting of the Support and Follow-up Group on the Situation in Mali, held in Bamako. The meeting afforded an opportunity for the Malian authorities, the region and the wider international community to review progress made on the implementation of the transitional road map since the Group's previous meeting, held in Brussels on 5 February, and to outline the way forward. Participants reiterated their firm conviction that any solution to the multidimensional crisis in Mali should be owned by Malians and based on the simultaneous pursuit of both the political and military tracks.

B. Security situation

18. The security situation in northern Mali remained complex and volatile. Major combat operations by the Malian Defence and Security Forces, AFISMA and the French armed forces (through Operation Serval) have largely ceased. The Malian and French armed forces and AFISMA have regained control over most major population centres in the north of the country. The reporting period was marked by clashes between the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad and the Mouvement unicité et jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest, in addition to fighting between other Tuareg and Arab armed elements. While the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad progressively reasserted control over the Kidal region, the Malian armed forces retook control of Anefis and advanced towards the town of Kidal.

19. It will be recalled that the Mouvement unicité et jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest, Ansar Eddine and Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb suffered heavy casualties and their operational capabilities were severely diminished as a result of the operations conducted by the Malian and French armed forces and AFISMA. Consequently, the groups fragmented and their elements blended into the local population, fled to neighbouring countries or joined existing groups. The reporting period was marked by the creation of new groups, including the Mouvement islamique de l'Azawad, the Haut Conseil de l'Azawad and the Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad. The first two groups comprise mainly elements allegedly from the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad and Ansar Eddine, with the Mouvement islamique de l'Azawad subsequently merging into the Haut Conseil de l'Azawad. The Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad comprises primarily Arab elements.

20. During the reporting period, there were increased clashes between the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad and armed extremist groups, including former allies in the 2012 offensive. At least five clashes between the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad and the Mouvement unicité et jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest took place in Anefis (120 km south-west of Kidal) and Ménaka, resulting in at least 10 casualties. The Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad wrested control of Anefis, reinforcing its presence in the area and also further north into Tessalit, Ménaka and elsewhere. Clashes also took place between the Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad and the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad, including in Ber. On 24 April, nine people were killed during clashes between the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad and Arab elements near Intaf. Also of concern are the reports of mounting tensions between Tuareg and Arab communities.

21. During the reporting period, the Malian armed forces redeployed some 1,200 troops in Gao and 650 troops in Timbuktu. On 6 May, an additional 250 troops were deployed to Ménaka. The armed forces also indicated that a number of troops deployed in Gao were preparing to move northwards. Announcements by the transitional authorities and corresponding movements by the Malian armed forces towards Kidal contributed to increasing tensions in the region and among Tuareg communities, raising fears in the north about a possible return to armed conflict. On 5 June, the Malian armed forces launched an offensive and took control of the town of Anefis (115 km from Kidal) from the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad. This advance was reportedly triggered by the arrests and expulsions of dark-skinned (non-Tuareg) inhabitants of Kidal by that armed group. The Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad stated that, of the

180 persons whom it had arrested, 20 had been detained for "espionage" for the Malian authorities while the others, as non-residents, would be deported to a "demarcation line" beyond Douentza. In the ensuing fighting on 5 June, the deaths of several elements of the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad were reported and the armed group retreated to the north. As at 6 June, the Malian armed forces were reportedly consolidating at a location 35 km south of the town of Kidal.

22. During the period under review, Operation Serval and AFISMA operations were completed in the Adrar des Ifoghas mountains, but continued around major population centres. French forces redeployed from the Kidal region to focus on operations, together with the Malian armed forces and AFISMA, against extremist armed groups along the Niger River area near the Mauritanian border, the Gao area, along the Ansongo axis and in the area of Lake Faguibine (south of Timbuktu). No major clashes occurred, but significant quantities of weapons, ammunition and explosives were captured and facilities for producing improvised explosive devices uncovered. From 8 to 18 April, targeted joint operations were conducted against elements of the Mouvement unicité et jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest in the Gao region. More than 13 tons of weapons and ammunition were discovered.

23. AFISMA continued to gradually assume operational responsibilities for several areas in northern Mali as Operation Serval began to draw down, as announced by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, Laurent Fabius, in Bamako on 5 April. As at 30 May, the strength of AFISMA stood at 6,085 troops, with personnel deployed in the towns and regions of Timbuktu, Gao and Ménaka, along the border with Burkina Faso in the area of Douentza and along the border with Mauritania in the area of Diabaly. The AFISMA contingent, previously based in the town of Kidal, redeployed to Aguelhok and Tessalit early in May. Operation Serval continued to maintain a company there. As at 29 May, the strength of the French forces stood at 4,000 troops, focusing on continuing operations.

24. The extremist armed groups have been weakened by the Malian, AFISMA and French operations and their ability to launch large-scale operations has been reduced. They have lost the tactical advantage and much of the safe haven to which they had access for years in northern Mali. These groups are, however, increasingly resorting to asymmetric tactics, including suicide bombings. The Mouvement unicité et jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest and other extremist groups have carried out a number of suicide attacks throughout the north. On 30 March, a suicide bomber struck a Malian armed forces checkpoint in Timbuktu, followed a few hours later by an insurgent attack on the city. On 12 April, a suicide bomber detonated his explosive device in a marketplace in the city of Kidal, killing four AFISMA Chadian soldiers and injuring another three. On 4 May, a complex attack involving a vehicle laden with explosives, small arms fire by the passengers in the vehicle and a motorcyclist wearing a suicide vest targeted a Malian armed forces convoy north of Gao, killing two soldiers. On 10 May, another suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack took place at the entrance of the camp of the Niger contingent of AFISMA in Ménaka. The same day, three suicide bombers targeted a Malian armed forces checkpoint in Gossi (154 km south-west of Gao), wounding two soldiers.

25. On 23 May at dawn, two simultaneous bomb attacks were carried out in the northern towns of Agadez and Arlit in the Niger. In Agadez, a military training camp was attacked by nine suicide bombers divided into three groups in a well-coordinated

attack consisting of a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device, direct fire with assault rifles and individual explosive belts. In total, 24 soldiers were killed and 16 critically injured. In Arlit, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device exploded at the entrance of the Somair uranium mine and processing facility, located outside the city. One civilian was killed and 14 critically injured. The Mouvement unicité et jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest claimed responsibility for the two suicide attacks.

26. Indications of potential unrest and insecurity were also observed in southern Mali. On 28 April seven alleged elements of the Mouvement unicité et jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest who had been arrested in March by Malian security forces in Bamako, and eight alleged armed group members who had been transferred from Timbuktu to Bamako, were detained at the gendarmerie camp in the capital. On 27 April, members of pro-Government militias (Ganda Iso and Ganda Koy) were arrested in Sevare. Meanwhile, on 6 April, a police officer was killed and a soldier wounded when a joint military-gendarmerie force attempted to end clashes between police officers in Bamako that reportedly stemmed from disagreements between pro-junta and other police officers over perceived unfairness in promotions. Sixteen police officers were arrested and a large quantity of weapons seized during the incident.

27. It is assessed that armed elements in Mali maintain the capacity to recover, with auxiliary support networks and recruitment structures reportedly remaining in place. There have also been reports that Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb has stepped up activities in the Tamesna region near the border with the Niger and Algeria, while armed extremist group training camps have been found east of Timbuktu.

28. Weapons-related stockpile management remains an urgent issue to be addressed in Mali and in neighbouring countries. In a recent report, Conflict Armament Research and the Small Arms Survey identified weaponry used by non-State armed groups in Mali that could probably be attributed to former Libyan military arsenals, including 106-mm recoilless rifles and NR-160 rockets and weapons such as BM-21 multiple-launch rocket systems, 9M22M rockets and UB-32 rocket launchers. They also indicated that armed groups had captured some of the materiel from the Malian armed forces.

29. The United Nations Mine Action Service has continued to coordinate the deployment of explosive ordnance disposal teams to priority contaminated areas in central Mali and has been further engaged in building the capacity of the Malian armed forces to mitigate explosive threats. Risk awareness sessions on explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices have also been conducted for AFISMA and United Nations personnel.

C. Extension of State authority

30. The transitional Government continued progressively to strengthen its presence in the northern regions, in particular Gao and Timbuktu. State control is gradually being restored in most major northern towns. The Governor and prefects have returned to the Gao region. In the Timbuktu region, however, the Governor and prefects have returned only to the town of Timbuktu in the light of continued insecurity in rural areas. Some basic administrative services have been re-established, although many key administrative buildings remain unusable owing to damage sustained during the conflict. Meanwhile, the Mouvement national pour la libération

de l'Azawad has retained control of the town of Kidal and has extended its influence throughout most of the region and south to the Ménaka area.

31. The Malian gendarmerie, national police and national guard have been gradually resuming law and order functions in northern Mali. By the middle of May, 78 police officers had redeployed to Timbuktu and 80 to Gao. Meanwhile, gendarmes continued to redeploy to the north, including 108 to Gao, 8 to Douentza, 105 to Ménaka, 5 to Ténenkou, 8 to Youwarou and 112 to the Timbuktu region. A total of 33 national guards have redeployed each to Douentza, Ténenkou and Youwarou, while 100 have returned to Gao. Justice and corrections institutions are still not functioning in the north, however, because the return of personnel has been hampered by security concerns. Logistical challenges, including a lack of vehicles, communication equipment and premises, have also undermined the operational effectiveness of the security institutions.

32. The United Nations has been closely coordinating its planning and assessments regarding the broader security and rule of law sectors with the European Union. On 22 April, the Foreign Affairs Council of the Union concluded that the Union would be ready to consider an additional engagement in Mali with a focus on security and the rule of law to help the authorities to combat terrorism and organized crime.

33. The European Union Training Mission in Mali had reached a strength of 540 military personnel by the end of May. In May, it worked closely with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, MINUSMA and other United Nations partners in developing and delivering a course on international humanitarian law and the protection of civilians. On 2 April, it began the training of the first of four Malian armed forces battalions, comprising 650 soldiers, which is expected to be completed by June. In cooperation with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, MINUSMA is training the Malian armed forces on the protection of women and children in situations of conflict.

34. As at 28 May, the Trust Fund in Support of Peace and Security in Mali, which is to provide support to the Malian defence and security sectors, had received some $7 million in confirmed pledges. MINUSMA has been coordinating with the transitional Government to determine a list of prioritized materiel requirements that could be provided using existing United Nations contracts. In providing support from the Trust Fund, compliance with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy will be ensured.

D. Human rights situation

35. The human rights situation in Mali remains of grave concern, with continued reports of abuses. It is exacerbated by insecurity in the north of the country. MINUSMA has continued to receive allegations of serious human rights violations in the north, including summary executions, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances and destruction and looting of private property. These allegations implicate elements of the Malian armed forces, in addition to armed groups such as the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad, the Mouvement unicité et jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest and the Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad. As highlighted in my previous report, the crisis has severely affected the delivery of basic services throughout the country, which impedes the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.

36. The interference by the Malian authorities in the exercise of civil and political rights, including freedoms of assembly and expression, remained an issue, as evidenced by the illegal arrest and arbitrary detention of Boukary Daou, the chief editor of *Le Républicain*, a Malian newspaper, in March. Mr. Daou was charged with inciting revolt and spreading false rumours after allegedly publishing an open letter by Malian soldiers on the situation within the armed forces and disclosing the entitlements of Captain Amadou Sanogo. The arrest suggested continued interference by pro-junta elements in the functioning of Malian institutions and politics. On 30 April, the case was dropped. Meanwhile, the extension of the state of emergency until 6 June has called into question the exercise of civil liberties because it allows for exceptional derogations from due process.

37. Reports of retaliatory violence by the Malian armed forces against members of the Tuareg and Arab communities have decreased. In Timbuktu, however, the risk to these communities remained significant in the light of persistent perceptions of their association with armed extremist groups. Most members of the Arab and Tuareg communities in the region have not returned, fearing retaliation by the Malian armed forces and the local population. Local authorities have attempted to provide humanitarian assistance to the remaining Arab and Tuareg families that have refrained from leaving their homes owing to security concerns. Eight Arabs and a Songhai who were reportedly arrested by the Malian armed forces in the Abarajou neighbourhood of Timbuktu on 14 February remain unaccounted for.

38. MINUSMA has continued to visit alleged members of armed groups arrested in the north and transferred to Bamako in order to monitor the legal proceedings and assess conditions. According to the judicial authorities, as at 31 May, some 400 individuals had been detained in connection with the conflict in the north. On 29 March, 27 of the detainees were released for lack of evidence.

39. During interviews conducted by MINUSMA during the reporting period in Mali and in refugee camps in Burkina Faso, Mauritania and the Niger, refugees and displaced persons have repeatedly raised the issue of past conflicts and ensuing impunity. Malian refugees in Mauritania and the Niger have cited the security situation and the lack of adequate basic services as major concerns in considering return. They are aware of the reconciliation process, but have expressed reservations over the lack of refugee representation in the National Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation.

40. To address human rights concerns, the transitional Government has established units to monitor operations by Malian troops deployed primarily in the main northern cities. It has also launched investigations into alleged human rights violations committed by troops. MINUSMA has supported these efforts by training 650 soldiers on international human rights and humanitarian and refugee law. MINUSMA has also briefed AFISMA contingents on the United Nations human rights due diligence policy.

E. Protection of civilians, child protection and conflict-related sexual violence

41. The United Nations has initiated a protection of civilians risk assessment to inform Mission planning on the implementation of the mandate to protect civilians.

Mechanisms are also being developed to mitigate the risks faced by civilians as the Mission implements its mandate in conjunction with the Malian armed forces.

42. The conflict in Mali has been characterized by numerous reports and incidents of grave violations against children, including recruitment and use of children as child soldiers, sexual violence, killing, maiming and attacks on schools and hospitals. The presence of children in self-defence militias continued to be reported. The transitional Government and the United Nations have finalized a draft agreement on the handover of children associated with armed forces or groups.

43. Since the launch of Operation Serval in January, the only allegations of conflict-related sexual violence have come from Kidal. MINUSMA has been unable to confirm them. Rapes committed during the occupation of the north continued to have repercussions, with children born from the rapes being abandoned. Institutions receiving abandoned children are at full capacity. The family code adopted in November 2011 prohibits the adoption of abandoned Malian children and orphans by foreigners.

F. Humanitarian situation

44. Of the at least 3.4 million Malians who are food insecure or who suffer from malnutrition, 1.4 million require immediate assistance, including 568,000 in the north who remain particularly vulnerable as a result of the conflict. Humanitarian activities in northern Mali are being carried out where possible, notwithstanding the continuing military operations, the proliferation of landmines and unexploded ordnance, banditry and violent incidents such as suicide attacks in and around the main urban areas.

45. As at 27 May, more than 475,000 people had been forced out of their homes by the conflict in the north and had sought shelter in central or southern Mali or in neighbouring countries. Most of the 301,000 internally displaced persons live with family or friends in extremely precarious conditions, depending for survival on humanitarian aid and the solidarity of host communities that had already been under considerable strain before the conflict began. During the first quarter of 2013, some 14,400 internally displaced persons returned to their homes in the north, while 23,500 people fled to the south.

46. Food security remains a major challenge, given that all three northern regions have been affected by a food crisis, with at least 1 in 5 households facing a severe food shortage. In the Tessalit and Abeibara districts of the Kidal region, the situation has reached emergency levels. It is predicted that by June food insecurity will reach emergency levels in 11 of the 13 administrative units in the north, while the beginning of the rainy season in the same period will hinder the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

47. Some schools reopened during the reporting period in the Gao and Timbuktu regions, with 461 of 1,079 schools operating (42 per cent). Close to 100,000 students and 2,345 teachers have returned to the classrooms. No schools are functioning in the Kidal region and more than 100,000 children continue to have no access to education in the north. Access to health care remains extremely limited in the north, mostly owing to the reluctance of health-care staff to return, while measles and cholera outbreaks have been reported in the districts of Gao and Assongo, respectively.

Non-food items have been distributed and infrastructure rehabilitated in Kidal, Mopti and Ségou. In conjunction with the Malian authorities and non-governmental organizations, the United Nations Children's Fund launched a Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions nutrition survey in Gao on 30 April. This is the first survey in conflict-affected areas of northern Mali since 2011 and will be vital in determining needs and priorities for nutrition interventions.

48. As at 29 May, funding for the consolidated appeals process for Mali for 2013 stood at only 29 per cent, with $120 million of the required $410 million having been raised. Additional resources are urgently needed to address the basic needs of millions of Malians who currently depend on humanitarian assistance for their survival.

G. Development situation

49. The political and security crisis has seriously affected economic and social development. The suspension of official development assistance, with the exception of humanitarian aid, resulted in the freezing of many investment projects and drastically reduced resources and budget allocations, especially for the basic social sectors. Gross domestic product growth reached a recession level of 1.2 per cent in late 2012, reflecting the effects of shocks to the economy during the year. The recession of 2012 resulted in increased vulnerability among households and a rise in the incidence of poverty to 43.6 per cent.

50. On 15 May, the European Union, France and Mali co-chaired an international donor conference in Brussels on the theme "Together for a new Mali", which was attended by 108 delegations. The conference, which was held to garner support for a plan for the sustainable recovery of Mali, built on existing documents such as the poverty reduction strategy and the priority action plan, which UNDP supported. A total of €3.25 billion was pledged, including by the European Union (€520 million) and, bilaterally, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The funds are to be used to rebuild State institutions and the military, repair damaged infrastructure, organize the presidential election, support dialogue with groups in the north and stimulate the economy.

51. Following several missions to the north, United Nations agencies have decided to re-establish an active presence there. A limited number of staff will be redeployed to Timbuktu, where a United Nations office is being established. The integrated United Nations presence in Mali will work closely with the World Bank. There have been initial discussions on priority areas of cooperation at the headquarters level and in Bamako.

III. Establishment of the Mission

A. Deployment of the Mission

52. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2100 (2013), MINUSMA was established on 25 April. UNOM was subsumed into MINUSMA with immediate effect and MINUSMA assumed responsibility for the implementation of the tasks

given to UNOM in resolution 2085 (2012). As from that date, David Gressly, the Head of UNOM, became the Acting Head of MINUSMA.

53. On 17 May, I appointed Albert Gerard Koenders of the Netherlands as my Special Representative for Mali and Head of MINUSMA. Mr. Koenders, who had served as my Special Representative for Côte d'Ivoire and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire since October 2011, assumed his responsibilities on 4 June.

54. Further to paragraph 33 of Security Council resolution 2100 (2013), the United Nations and the Malian transitional authorities are close to finalizing a status-of-forces agreement with regard to MINUSMA, along with two supplemental arrangements relating to the provision of support to AFISMA and to the handover of detainees by MINUSMA to the transitional authorities. Discussions are also under way with the Government of France on arrangements for the implementation of paragraph 18 of resolution 2100 (2013), in which the Council authorized the French troops, within the limits of their capacities and areas of deployment, to use all necessary means, from the commencement of the activities of MINUSMA until the end of the Mission's mandate, to intervene in support of elements of MINUSMA when under imminent and serious threat upon request of the Secretary-General.

55. Building upon the staff and structure of UNOM, the Secretariat, in coordination with MINUSMA, has accelerated the deployment of staff to the Mission in Bamako and key logistics and security personnel to the major northern population centres to facilitate future deployments. This deployment is contingent upon a number of factors, including safety and security considerations and enabling capabilities. The deployment of additional personnel is guided by the following three principles: ensure a seamless transition from AFISMA to MINUSMA by 1 July; ensure that no security vacuum emerges and that gains made to date are not eroded; and ensure that urgent mandated tasks can be performed, in particular in relation to the political process.

56. A flexible approach to mission support has been adopted. The overriding consideration is the security and safety of United Nations personnel and assets. A phased and prioritized approach will be taken on the basis of security conditions and the level of enabling capabilities deployed. The principles of the global field support strategy will be applied, including operating with a light mission footprint supported by a back office, which will be established in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, for transactional activities.

57. As at 30 May, MINUSMA comprised 95 international staff (57 substantive staff and 38 mission support staff) and six national staff. There were also two military liaison officers and three police officers from the Standing Police Capacity. During the start-up phase, in addition to personnel from the Standing Police Capacity, up to 10 United Nations police officers will be deployed to support the establishment of the police component. Furthermore, specialists from the Justice and Corrections Standing Capacity have been deployed. The Secretariat has also established planning support teams at Headquarters and in MINUSMA.

58. Current plans are to establish the military headquarters in June and progressively deploy additional units as they can be generated for operations beginning on 1 July. Priority is being accorded to the deployment of enabling units on or before 1 July to support the transition from AFISMA and the transition of units already deployed. The deployment of engineer units, explosive ordnance

disposal companies, level II hospitals, transport companies and headquarters protection companies is currently being negotiated. In addition, the bulk of the units deployed in AFISMA are expected to be transitioned on 1 July. The remaining units will be deployed as soon as memorandums of understanding are negotiated.

59. Current timelines for the deployment of military force enablers indicate that most will arrive and be operational in Mali towards the end of 2013. In addition, current assessments of commercial contractors capable of performing large-scale construction projects in northern Mali indicate limited availability. Consequently, it is expected that MINUSMA will face significant challenges in developing operational bases in Gao and Timbuktu during the remainder of 2013. The capacity of MINUSMA to operate from those locations during that period will therefore be limited.

60. In addition to its civilian headquarters in Bamako, MINUSMA is according priority to the establishment of the force headquarters and two regional and force sector headquarters in Gao and Timbuktu. These will serve as the main bases of deployment of MINUSMA military, police and civilian personnel in northern Mali in the start-up phase. The Mission's ability to establish a secure and capable operational presence in Gao and Timbuktu, as well as in Kidal, where in the first phase an antenna office will be established, during the first phase of deployment will depend heavily on the deployment of force enablers, such as logistics, engineering and transport units, in addition to the availability of commercial contractors that can provide construction and related camp services in these locations. Teams of experts have conducted field surveys in the logistics, engineering, aviation, communications, supplies and medical areas. The preparations for deployment and the design of camps and infrastructure are continuing. The strategic lift of materiel is being organized, including the early establishment of the Mission's communications and information technology infrastructure.

61. A small communication and public information team is on the ground working on several key elements of the transition to and establishment of MINUSMA. Its activities include undertaking public outreach to raise awareness of the Mission and explain its mandate, providing support to elections-related communication and to the National Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation and liaising with AFISMA to plan outreach activities in preparation for the transition from AFISMA to MINUSMA.

62. A small integrated security section has been established under the leadership of a chief security adviser in order to assess the security of United Nations personnel and premises during the transition while continuing to support current United Nations operations. Specific threat assessments and security risk assessments are being completed to determine the feasibility of further civilian deployments in the areas of Timbuktu, Gao, Mopti and Kidal. My Special Representative is the designated official for security in Mali.

63. Draft concepts of operations have been prepared for the Mission's military, police, civilian and security components. MINUSMA will establish a secure environment for the extension of State authority and civilian security and make space for stabilization activities in northern Mali, deter and take active steps to prevent the return of armed elements and enable the Malian transitional authorities to take on their national responsibilities. It will focus on information-led operations in support of the Malian armed forces or unilaterally to protect the population and United Nations personnel, facilities and equipment. MINUSMA will secure and

maintain a presence in the key population centres and maintain freedom of movement along the connecting lines of communication.

B. Provision of support to the African-led International Support Mission in Mali

64. AFISMA troops and police continue to play a significant role, in coordination with the Malian and French armed forces, in stabilizing the security situation in the north. As at 29 May, AFISMA had 6,085 troops, including 92 staff officers, 18 individual police personnel and a full police unit comprising 140 officers deployed in Bamako. The advance team of another formed police unit, comprising 72 officers, is deployed in Sevare. This represents 87 per cent of the total forces pledged to AFISMA by various troop- and police-contributing countries.

65. MINUSMA continued to support AFISMA by providing planning support, establishing coordination mechanisms and identifying priority needs. Furthermore, UNOM and MINUSMA continued to develop key documents for AFISMA, including military and police operational directives, guidelines for the protection of civilians, rules of engagement and a code of conduct.

66. AFISMA contingents received logistical support from the main logistics base in Bamako, a logistics node in Niamey and three forward logistics bases in Sevare, Gao and Timbuktu. A private company contracted by the United States supplied the forward-most units in Gao and Timbuktu. This company will also provide training to AFISMA. Logistics remain a significant challenge, however, owing to inadequate infrastructure, poor communication and electricity shortages. In addition, bilateral and multilateral donors have provided funding and reimbursement for operations, critical life support (rations, water and fuel), logistical support for strategic and in-theatre movements, direct materiel support and the training of enabling units.

C. Transition from the African-led International Support Mission in Mali to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

67. The Secretariat, with the support of the United Nations Office to the African Union, has deepened its engagement with the African Union and ECOWAS regarding the transition from AFISMA to MINUSMA. On 8 and 9 May, a multidisciplinary United Nations team met its African Union and ECOWAS counterparts at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa to review transitional arrangements in the areas of military, police, training and mission support, including the conduct of a joint planning session and the subsequent establishment of a joint AFISMA-MINUSMA mechanism in Bamako to help to oversee the transition.

68. The bulk of AFISMA military and police elements will make the transition to MINUSMA under the unified command of the MINUSMA Force Commander and Police Commissioner. This includes six infantry battalions, a reserve unit and enablers, in addition to two formed police units. A number of military staff officers and individual police officers will also be transferred from the current AFISMA military and police headquarters. All AFISMA personnel will be subject to United

Nations assessment, predeployment training and vetting procedures, including the Organization's human rights vetting policy, to ensure that they meet force requirements and have the skills necessary to implement the Mission's mandate.

69. The United Nations, in coordination with the African Union, ECOWAS and AFISMA, is conducting predeployment visits and in-theatre inspections of the contingent-owned equipment and self-sustainment capabilities of the formed units in preparation for their planned transition to MINUSMA units and ensuing negotiations on memorandums of understanding. Initial assessments indicate that the current AFISMA force does not include the enabling units required for MINUSMA operations. To meet the identified military enabling requirements for MINUSMA, additional units will be required, including for engineering, logistics and medical contingents. Likewise, in-theatre military tactical airlift and multi-use aviation capability, including ground support, will need to be generated, deployed and developed. Military aviation capabilities will be essential for the deployment of the force, for its logistics re-supply and for operations, including for casualty and medical evacuations. As at 3 June, however, Member States had made only limited military aviation pledges. A lack of sufficient military aviation assets would have a significant negative impact on the Mission's deployment and the development of its operational capability.

70. Full operational capability to implement the mandate will be gradually developed during the remainder of 2013. Deployed AFISMA units have been given a grace period of four months to reach the required United Nations standards through either national or bilateral assistance or support from the Trust Fund in Support of AFISMA. Critical gaps remain for attack and utility helicopters and for information units.

71. A significant effort will be made to address the gaps in the equipment and self-sustainment capacities of the AFISMA military contingents and formed police units and bring them up to United Nations standards. These shortfalls are being addressed by bilateral and multilateral donors and the Trust Fund in Support of AFISMA, on the basis of a prioritized list of needs conveyed by the African Union and AFISMA headquarters. The Trust Fund has received $35 million in confirmed pledges, of which $6 million is earmarked for humanitarian mine action activities. These will be implemented by the United Nations civilian presence in Mali in coordination with, but outside the command of, the AFISMA military component.

72. The AFISMA requirements have been identified, coordinated and prioritized in conjunction with the African Union, ECOWAS and AFISMA headquarters. The first delivery of equipment from available strategic deployment stocks via airlift began on 30 May. The main delivery by sealift is under preparation. The support provided through the Trust Fund for AFISMA, while significant, will not by itself meet the capability gaps. Considerable efforts will be required of the troop- and police-contributing countries and other donors for the deployment of the requisite military equipment and training. The provision of all support through the Trust Fund will be carried out in compliance with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy.

73. Police-contributing countries have officially confirmed pledges of four formed police units for MINUSMA, in addition to the unit already on the ground and the three units committed for AFISMA. During the initial phase, formed police units and individual police officers will be considered for deployment to Bamako, Gao

and Timbuktu and, later, to Kidal and Mopti. It is important that Member States support the Mission by providing officers with the required skill sets and linguistic capacity, and, in particular, women officers.

74. AFISMA deployment locations are broadly aligned with planned United Nations locations, but some adjustments will be required as MINUSMA deploys. United Nations support will, however, be phased in, first through the development of major operational bases in Gao and Timbuktu, from where other locations in the north, including the planned antenna office in Kidal, will be supported. Other MINUSMA deployment locations in the north will be supported in the first phase only with land acquisition and drilling of wells. Additional support services will be provided at a later stage as the logistics support plan is implemented, including by drawing upon military enablers such as explosive ordnance disposal engineers, construction, combat engineers, transport, aviation and medical units when they become available. It is critical that such capabilities deploy as swiftly as possible to enable the timely development of the Mission's operational capability.

75. At the joint planning meeting in Addis Ababa, the African Union and ECOWAS indicated their commitment to maintaining their political presence in Mali. They suggested the possible co-location with MINUSMA outside Bamako of some of their personnel, including African Union and ECOWAS human rights observers and police personnel, in addition to military observers, following the transition from AFISMA to MINUSMA. They have engaged the United Nations on possible areas of support in terms of strategic and operational-level communication, in-theatre movement, accommodation, medical care and security for their personnel in the country after the transition to MINUSMA. The United Nations will work closely with the African Union and ECOWAS after the transition from AFISMA to MINUSMA to consolidate and ensure the sustainability of continuing mediation efforts and the broader political processes in Mali.

IV. Observations

76. Little more than a year ago, the Malian democratic process was derailed. Less than six months ago, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Mali were seriously challenged by armed groups that had seized control of more than half of the country's territory. The mobilization of the international community, in particular France, the African Union and ECOWAS, averted a major catastrophe in Mali and the region.

77. The situation in Mali has improved since the beginning of 2013. I welcome the progress made towards the implementation of the transitional Government's road map for the transition, which should lead to the full restoration of constitutional order and territorial integrity. Peace and stability countrywide can be achieved only through dialogue. Grievances cannot be addressed through violence, as the experience in the north over the past three months illustrates. I welcome the commitment of the transitional Government and armed groups, in particular the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad, to holding direct talks as soon as possible and encourage all stakeholders to support the mediation efforts undertaken by the ECOWAS Mediator in collaboration with the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union. I encourage all stakeholders to work towards a timely interim agreement paving the way for the holding of elections nationwide, which would set

the stage for substantive discussions with elected authorities thereafter. The fighting between the forces of the transitional Government and the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad in and around Anefis is deeply troubling and must cease immediately. The parties should refrain from any actions that might jeopardize the political process. In accordance with Security Council resolution 2100 (2013), the United Nations stands ready to coordinate efforts by the international community in order to support, in close coordination with the African Union and ECOWAS, all aspects of the transitional road map.

78. I welcome the launch of the work of the National Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation. It is a strong signal of commitment by the transitional Government and the people of Mali to beginning to address the deep-rooted problems that have afflicted all communities in Mali for many years. To achieve genuine reconciliation, the Commission will need to be as inclusive as possible in its quest for dialogue, including by consulting religious, community and traditional leaders, and through the use of both traditional and institutional dispute resolution mechanisms. The dialogue process should consist of multiple tracks, including between and among communities and between the transitional Government and the population.

79. As preparations for the elections intensify, I am encouraged by the determination of the Malian people to hold the polls as soon as conditions permit. I salute their commitment to establishing elected institutions mandated to address serious and pressing security, social, economic, humanitarian and development challenges. At the same time, I am concerned by a number of technical and political challenges, as highlighted above, including the worrying situation in Kidal, which has not yet allowed for the deployment of electoral officials and needs to be resolved. Elections in the present circumstances will have inevitable shortcomings. I believe, however, that Malians will accept the outcome if they feel that it genuinely represents their collective will. It would be important for the Malian authorities to carefully consider whether the timetable that they have adopted allows sufficient time to ensure that the elections actually contribute to enhancing stability and national reconciliation.

80. I encourage stakeholders to reach consensus on outstanding legal and procedural questions, such as voting arrangements for refugees and internally displaced persons and issues associated with the voter register. All possible steps should be taken to ensure that free, fair, transparent and inclusive elections are held throughout the country, including the northern regions. The international community must continue and strengthen its support to the continuing dialogue on arrangements for nationwide elections — including the redeployment of State electoral officials, security arrangements and confidence-building measures — and the efforts to forge consensus among stakeholders on the modalities for the conduct of the elections. It is also essential that political leaders make a clear commitment to acting peacefully and responsibly, accepting the outcome of the polls and working together in the wake of the elections for a stronger and more united Mali. MINUSMA will provide technical, logistic and security support within the limits of its capacity and the constraints posed by the fact that the Mission is in the early stages of its deployment.

81. Major combat operations by the Malian and French armed forces and AFISMA have largely ceased since armed groups were ousted from the Adrar des Ifoghas area and the cities of Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal and Mopti earlier in 2013. The increasing presence in the north of the three forces has helped to stabilize the situation and

significantly hamper the movement and actions of armed groups. Nonetheless, the security situation on the ground remains fluid, with sporadic clashes between armed groups and continued asymmetrical attacks throughout the three northern regions. Furthermore, the advance of the Malian armed forces northwards towards Kidal and the fatal clashes with elements of the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad on 5 June have exacerbated tensions and increased the volatility of the situation in the region. While the operational capabilities of the armed groups have been reduced, attacks in recent months in Mali and the subregion have shown that they retain the capability to pose a significant threat. The Malian armed forces and AFISMA have been targeted. United Nations troops and other United Nations personnel may well face a similar risk. This would warrant mitigation measures that may, at times, affect the ability of MINUSMA to carry out aspects of its mandate throughout Mali. Other factors of instability, including criminality and inter-communal violence, will also need to be urgently addressed by the Malian authorities with international support and due respect for human rights.

82. I remain concerned about the human rights situation. Allegations of violations and abuses continue to be reported and need to be addressed by all parties. I commend the solidarity of the population in general for providing shelter to internally displaced persons during the conflict. I am, however, deeply concerned about the plight of internally displaced persons and refugees in camps inside and outside Mali. Most refugees wish to return home, but fear of reprisals prevents them from doing so. Substantial stabilization operations will be required to create a secure environment that is essential to such returns. In this regard, I urge the authorities to adhere strictly to human rights principles as the institutions complete their redeployment to the north and note that long-term reconciliation will not be possible without the promotion and defence of the human rights of all communities in the north.

83. The mandate of MINUSMA presents complex challenges. The United Nations is deploying a peacekeeping operation in a new geopolitical context with threats not previously encountered in a United Nations peacekeeping environment. MINUSMA has a mandate to use all means necessary to protect the population and deter and take active steps to prevent the return of armed elements to the key population centres. This does not include peace enforcement or counter-terrorism responsibilities, which will be assumed by French forces. The protection of the population in its areas of deployment and within existing capabilities would be an immediate priority for the Mission, however.

84. There remain many challenges to a smooth transition from AFISMA to MINUSMA. The initial focus will be on maintaining seamless continuity between the two operations to preserve the security gains made to date and avoid creating any vacuums. An initial transition period of six months will see the build-up of additional military capacity and the concomitant extension of the Mission's operations. The logistics supply chain is a key challenge in the light of the large size of the area of operations and the generally poor state of infrastructure in Mali. Climatic conditions further compound the challenge, especially the impending rainy season. In other locations, access will be restricted owing to the threat of asymmetric attacks and mitigating measures will need to be put in place. The generation of logistical enablers will be an initial priority to enable the establishment and sustainment of the Mission in northern Mali. Not all these capabilities will be immediately available at the beginning of the transition from

AFISMA to MINUSMA, however, meaning that Mission components will be deployed in phases as security conditions improve and infrastructure is established.

85. Given these challenges, I request the support of all Member States in deploying MINUSMA. The deployment will require efforts by all stakeholders — first and foremost Malians themselves, but also the continued support of the African Union, ECOWAS, the European Union and the broader international community.

86. The situation in Mali has far-reaching regional and international repercussions. While focusing our collective efforts on stabilizing the situation nationally, it is important to remain mindful of the danger posed by armed elements moving to neighbouring countries to carry out terrorist attacks and engage in criminal activities. The attacks in the Niger on 23 May underscore this threat. As such, it is vital to develop and build upon existing regional approaches to addressing security, governance and humanitarian challenges that are transnational in nature. To this end, I am finalizing the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel and look forward to the support of Member States in its implementation. In the meantime, MINUSMA will need time to build up its capacity. Patience, concerted support and significant investment will be required by the international community to protect the gains made to date, strengthen stability in Mali and guard against a widening of the conflict in the surrounding region.

87. I should like to express my appreciation to João Honwana, who served as Head of UNOM in January and February, and David Gressly, who served as Head of UNOM and Acting Head of MINUSMA until the deployment of my Special Representative for Mali on 4 June. My appreciation also extends to the AFISMA leadership and the troop- and police-contributing countries, in addition to bilateral partners, regional and multilateral organizations, in particular the African Union, ECOWAS and the European Union, the United Nations country team and non-governmental organizations, for their work in support of the people of Mali.